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homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

Monday, July 27, 1942

SUBJECT: "NOW IS TIME TO DO SUMMER CANNING" Information from marketing specialists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Housewives who want to do their part in winning the war often ask: "What can I do?" With the Red Cross and the other women's volunteer organizations that can use so many busy hands, it's easy to think of doing your part away from home. But there's plenty of important war work to do right in your kitchen. "Keep your family healthy and strong. Keep them fit and ready for any job. Good nourishing food builds strong bodies." That's the song of the kitchen!

A song that goes along with this, is: "Conserve all food supplies -- not a scrap must go to waste." Canning and more canning for the winter war days that are sure to come. Even though you see the shelves of stores today lined with cans of fruits and vegetables, don't be misled into thinking there will be no change. Canned food on the shelf now is no insurance that it won't be hard to get this winter. Breathes there a homemaker who hasn't heard that tin and canning supplies are scarce -- and that commercial canneries are faced with labor and transportation shortages? That sugar quotas are limited? Mrs. Homemaker the problem of next winter's canned fruit supply for your family is up to you.

Right now the markets are absolutely beautiful with fresh fruits -- they simply stare you in the face and demand that you take some home. Remember the old fable about the grasshopper and the ant? That fable fits right now. You know, it's the story of the grasshopper who danced all summer long. The busy little ant stored away his food for the winter, and when the cold blasts came he had sufficient supplies so that he lived and ate well the whole winter through. But the poor little grasshopper had lived only for the gay summer days and he had stored away for the winter

nothing but happy memories, so all he could do was to go away and find some quiet corner in which to die. No need to hint to you the moral of that story, or suggest that you might apply it to the large supplies of fresh luscious fruits on the markets. Now is the time to do canning for next winter - now while fruit crops are ripening and being shipped to places all over the USA. The Department of Agriculture has been telling homemakers -- "Buy your fruits for canning while they are in season -- and in abundance. Remember prices are most reasonable when fruits are most plentiful." A wise homemaker watches the local markets to be sure she is getting full value for her money.

Because the sugar regulations for canning have been misunderstood by many people, the Government is now urging homemakers especially to aid the war effort by canning fruits. This is what the recent order said: "There is no specific limitation on amounts of sugar which a family may obtain for purposes of home canning. The home canning provision of the sugar rationing regulations gives American housewives every opportunity to conserve fresh fruit wherever and whenever available." The release also states that the Government considers the conservation of fruit vital to the war effort as the conservation of sugar. So there you are -- if you have any doubts. Of course, you know that the Government expects 4 quarts of fruit to be canned for every pound of sugar. Your local War Price and Rationing Board is authorized to give you the amount of sugar required for your canning. For determining the amounts of sugar needed, guide studies were made by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Office of Price Administration which indicate that 6 pounds of sugar per person were used in normal times for canning. However, the study showed that persons in rural areas consumed about 36 quarts of fruit annually. On this basis 9 pounds of sugar per person would be required. But no limitation on sugar needed by families for canning has been made. Local boards are instructed to consider each application individually, according to the availability of fresh fruit in your area and the amount canned in previous seasons.

There are so many fresh fruits on local markets that I hardly need tell you about them. Of course, you know that peaches are being featured as a nation-wide Victory Food Special now -- from July 16 to August 5. Peaches from Georgia, South Carolina, Arkansas and other Southern States are on most local markets in abundant quantities. On the West Coast apricots are plentiful -- Washington State has a bumper crop. California and Utah also have large crops. The West Coast has pears -- and plums. - Other States have summer apples. No matter where you live, if it's in the United States, you can get fresh fruits in sufficient quantities to can.

The Department of Agriculture and the Office of Price Administration together have issued a new leaflet to help you with wartime canning. The leaflet has suggestions on how to get sufficient sugar for your canning; the amount of sugar needed for different fruits in order to "stretch" your sugar quotas, and many other helpful aids. If you would like to have a copy of this free leaflet -- "Sugar for Wartime Canning," write a card to the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Remember the title - "Sugar for Wartime Canning."

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